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ABSTRACT

The range and nature of the community college trustees' responsibilities are examined in this report. The wide variety found nationwide in selection criteria, terms of service, and composition of these boards is initially discussed, followed by an examination of board representation, the necessity for it to reflect its constituents' needs and interests, and the problems it faces in becoming more representative. Next, board responsibilities for selecting the college president, holding him accountable for observable performance, adopting and revising policy, attending to financial matters and external affairs, and formulating college goals are considered. Then, board relationships with the president, faculty and staff, students, and governmental bodies are studied. Finally, board committees, capital development, fiscal programs, and negotiations with faculty and staff are treated. (JO)

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COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRUSTEES:

RESPONSIBILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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Preface

This paper should be viewed as a "discussion piece" or a "point of view." The suggestions, recommendations, and judgments represent the current thinking of the authors. This is not a "how-to-do-it" book or guide for all community colleges. It is an attempt to build a case for more active involvement of truly "representative" boards.

During the past year the authors participated in several convention programs and regional workshops with community college trustees and presidents. The sincerity and enthusiasm of those people were always evident. And yet there were always the nagging and inevitable questions, "What should a board do?" "What should its role be?" Almost any answer to those questions will offend some people. Vague or general replies raise more questions than they answer and specific replies please some but irritate others.

Viewed historically it is not surprising that opinions differ greatly on the role a board should play in the governance and operation of a community college. As one writer noted,

> literature . . . on the subject of two year college boards appears to have evolved through three approximate stages: (1) keep the board out of affairs as they are hopeless amateurs; (2) involve the board only on broad policy matters, which includes the central responsibility of hiring a chief administrator; and (3) involve the board totally whether they wish to be or not (12:2).

The evolution in the literature has taken place over the past twenty years. Many current trustees and presidents first learned about governing boards from articles and books published in the early 1950's while the attitudes of others were formed by more recent publications. Although this helps explain the wide variation of attitudes and opinions, it does not imply that one view is necessarily right or wrong. Fortunately or unfortunately that is a matter for each board to decide.

The authors welcome criticisms, suggestions, and comments. An additional publication on this topic may be prepared if there are sufficient reactions and interest.

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COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRUSTEES:

RESPONSIBILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Introduction

Citizen participation in affairs affecting the community is a long-standing American tradition dating back to the New England town meeting of colonial days. In the intervening centuries the concept has remained constant: The "people" know best how to govern; the "people" can best decide how to minister to local needs. What has not remained constant is the "people." The community of interests that served to bind together the early New Englanders has not been pertinent for longer than many Americans care to admit, but the pleasant notion of those orderly, uncomplicated times persists. The reality is that the community has long been comprised of dissimilar elements involving race, religion, color, national origin, economic status, and the like. The "people" have only in the past two decades begun to reflect the needs and problems and heartaches and aspirations of many of the various parts of humanity that all together make up the community. Only recently have we witnessed on a national scale prolonged dissatisfaction, unrest, demonstrations, and riots. Judging from recent events two facts seem evident: The parts making up the community do not necessarily have a unity of purpose, and the ministering of local needs by the "people" is a complex matter.

Citizens serving on community college boards ostensibly represent the community. It is assumed that they have been selected or elected because they are knowledgeable about and responsive to the needs of the "people" in their communities. Yet, according to the study conducted in 1968 by Rodney T. Hartnett of Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey, an unrepresentative number

of board members are white, male, 50 years old or older, Protestant, and have yearly incomes of more than $20,000 (8:57). Such a profile is hardly reflective of the community served by typical community colleges. Yet, whether or not one approves of the makeup of a majority of community college boards, the boards do have ultimate responsibility in the operation of the institution. It is this apparent contradiction between representing the "people" in theory but in fact being unrepresentative that has resulted in some people losing confidence in their local boards and demanding new forms of control and governance. One reaction to these demands has been the fear that the loss of lay control by local boards would result in control of community colleges by governmental bureaucracies located at some distance from the people in state capitals and Washington, D.C. According to some of these critics it is self-evident that state and national bureaucracies are unresponsive and disdainful of local needs. "Government," as opposed to "people," according to the thinking of many Americans, is an ever-present threat to the rights of individuals and self-determination by local communities. A careful look at the American record, however, will reveal that the demand for the intervention of a higher governmental unit comes about only after abuses by special interest groups over a long period of time have become intolerable to significantly large segments of the general public.

The fact is that many community and junior college systems have proliferated without regard to establishing an effective network for the servicing of all sections and constituencies within a general area. The fact is that many existing community colleges were so without a sound financial capability at their creation that they never should have been established in the first instance. The fact is that most community colleges are dependent upon increasingly larger appropriations from state governments for their very survival. The cries of

anguish, therefore, that government, which is also comprised of representatives of the "people," is usurping local prerogatives, seem to lose their sense of urgency when the facts of the matter are considered rationally. Looking at these facts, one can make an impressive case that local boards are all too often doing an extremely poor job of governing.

Nevertheless the fact remains that no one has proposed a better idea for governing institutions that are expected to be sensitive and responsive to local needs. Community colleges have been established and are supported because people want a college concerned about their needs, aspirations, interests, and welfare. Therefore it is important that steps be taken to improve local governance in order to increase awareness of local needs, more nearly achieve local aspirations, satisfy local interests, and improve the general welfare of the citizens.

Selection, Term, and Composition

The legal authority of community college boards is derived from and determined by state laws. Because of this it is virtually impossible to make any general statements about the processes of selection, terms of office, and the composition of boards. Boards are appointed and elected in several ways. In the past many private junior college boards were self-perpetuating. That is, board members had the authority to appoint their successors. Now most community and junior colleges are public institutions whose board members are elected or appointed by public officials such as governors and county supervisors (8:68). According to the survey by Hartnett, the most popular methods are election by the local community and appointment by the governor.

Board members of public community colleges serve for various lengths of time. In some states the normal period is three years, whereas in others six year terms are common. Among private institutions the variation is even greater.

The size of boards varies from five to at least twenty-five. The average size of public community and junior college boards is seven members, although in at least one state public community colleges have boards of fifteen.

Representativeness

Obviously boards must reflect their constituencies. This is what most people like to believe. Yet, the Hartnett study points out that the composition of the average board, whether it is elected or appointed, is the residual manifestation of a society that no longer exists in most locales. Normal procedures move so slowly that these inequities persist even when they become apparent and create doubts about colleges and their policies. Terms of office are long and staggered so that the continuity that is sought serves also to perpetuate the social lag. It is left, therefore, to the board members themselves to remedy the inequities; if necessary, board members should step down so that they can be replaced by members of unrepresented groups. The specific steps to be taken must be determined by the individual board just as it determines what occupational programs are needed to meet the needs of the community. If there is a significant Black population in the college district and no Black on the board, a board member should step down so that a Black can be appointed, or a Puerto Rican, or a Mexican-American, or a woman, or a labor representative.

Elected boards pose additional problems. Running for election requires considerable time and, in the case of large districts, money. There is little doubt that these requirements preclude most people from even considering running for boards. Given these demands of time and money, how can people qualified to represent certain constituencies be identified, persuaded to run, and supported during the campaign? According to Mrs. Mildred Bastian, a Missouri state leader

and St. Louis-St. Louis County Junior College District board member since its establishment in 1962, in St. Louis "it has been suggested that a standing committee, broadly representative of civic, racial, labor, and other groups, should be responsible for seeking out well-qualified candidates and supporting their candidacy. The establishment of such a committee would make it possible for a candidate to run for office without personal cost beyond his or her means. It also would preclude the possibility of obligation to one or two large contributors." Although this approach would raise questions about "who" selects the committee members and how representative are "they," it does offer at least a partial solution to the problem of obtaining genuine representativeness.

Some board members have sincerely argued that they genuinely try to represent all the people in their communities. Nevertheless, as Dr. Jerome Williams, another member of the St. Louis-St. Louis County Junior College Board, pointed out at the 1970 AAJC convention, every person exercises selective perception, has difficulty fully understanding other people's views, and is incapable of truly representing all elements of any community (18). All a board member can do is make every effort to understand himself, respect and consider the views of others, vote according to his own conscience, and insist upon a board as representative as possible of the community being served.

If the board is unwilling to move positively or if its internal dynamics render it unable to make this move, the collective motivations of the board members become suspect and its role is distrusted, or questioned at best, for, after all, the entire thrust to maintain local control is predicated upon the proposition that from within that framework local needs can best be determined. If personal prestige or collective inaction serve only to maintain the inequitable status quo, the local board system is not only doomed to failure--it deserves to fail.

Even after a board has become as representative as its size and other conditions permit, representation can be improved by establishing ad hoc and advisory committees that include citizens. Citizen advisory committees for occupational programs have been widely used for years, and ad hoc citizen committees to help pass tax and bond issues are also common. Many similar opportunities can reasonably and productively be created by a board interested in knowing and utilizing its community's needs and resources. In a subsequent section of this paper several examples will be examined in more detail.

Responsibilities

General. What is expected of a board member once he has been selected to serve? There is certainly not a concise list that can be drawn up since boards of different colleges located in different states assume varying degrees of responsibility and authority. There are, however, certain duties basic to all boards.

When asked to indicate what kinds of college activities consumed most of their time, board members named the following: Attending full board meetings, attending committee meetings, attending ad hoc meetings of college groups, making speeches on behalf of the college, soliciting contributions, recruiting students, and holding personal conferences with college personnel (15:6-7).

In terms of decision making and responsibilities, the board's single most important duty is that of appointing--or dismissing--the president. This duty will be discussed in depth a little later. Another duty that cannot be overemphasized is the adoption of written board policies. Adequate fulfillment of this duty requires continued re-examination of present policies, revisions when appropriate, and the adoption of new policies in anticipation of future issues, demands and contingencies. With the exception of three topics--long-range planning, development of a campus master plan, and selection of an architect--

board members reported most of their activities were to review, advise, and approve the actions of staff members (8:70). Boards make faculty appointments, set wage scales, and approve retirement plans. Boards establish rules of conduct for students, decide on types of and expenditures for athletic programs, and make policies on student-invited speakers, student publications, and the recognition of student associations.

In the area of finance, boards supervise investments, analyze expenditures, make long-range plans for facilities, and determine tuition. Boards approve what courses and programs will be offered to the students, what instructional methods will be used, what library services will be offered, and under what conditions students will be admitted to the college.

Board members are also responsible for certain external affairs--affairs only indirectly concerning students, faculty, and staff. These include fund-raising, directing alumni affairs, in some instances selecting new board members, and appointing members of advisory committees (15:10-11).

Establishment of College Goals. If it is agreed that local control is desirable because local trustees are in the best position to ascertain and respond to local needs, and because local trustees are accessible and accountable to the people they represent, the board should determine the goals of the college. Although the president, students, faculty, and staff will be involved in the process of goal determination, the trustees must be the final arbiters. Besides relying on the professional staff for recommendations, the board should systematically utilize lay advisory committees, local surveys, and studies completed by other agencies to obtain additional information, advice, and recommendations. Goals include such things as the types of educational programs that will be offered, the admissions policies, the tuition and student fees policies, the

services that will be provided, e.g., counseling, financial aids, job placement and child care centers, and the physical proximity or nearness of the college to various neighborhoods in the community. Goals are established, consciously or unconsciously, early in the life of a college. Goals are relatively specific statements that implement the more general mission or philosophy statements commonly found in college catalogs and brochures. College goals are not static and should gradually change in accordance with changing local needs and the demands of society.

Probably the three most critical decisions to be made are those dealing with admission standards, tuition rates, and instructional programs. The college may very well have an "open-door" admissions policy, but this can be misleading. Often the "open door" becomes a "revolving door," a practice that admits and swiftly sends students away with failure imprinted on their psyches and written on their transcripts. A genuine commitment to "open-door" admissions will necessitate the employment of competent, compassionate counselors and instructors who will make every effort to provide successful experiences for <u>all</u> students, not just the "gifted" and "highly motivated." Trustees supporting this admissions policy will see the opportunity to obtain an education as a right, not a privilege. They will direct the staff to actively recruit students who can profit from the college's offerings, and they will insist that the college continuously improve its programs and staff to increase the probability of student success.

If board members reflect the needs and aspirations of the community, they have the responsibility of determining both the format of instruction and the types of programs to be offered. Will the format be based on one instructional approach or will a variety be utilized? Will the same textbooks and other media be used for all students, or will a variety be available? The board's

responsibility is to understand fully what instructional program, including the mixture of media and methods, is being recommended and to make a commitment to a particular program. It is then the board's responsibility to honor that commitment with the funds necessary to allow the instructional program a fair opportunity to succeed, to stand firm before the inevitable critics, and, possibly the most difficult assignment of all, to maintain objectivity throughout the evaluation of the instructional program.

Experiences of many community colleges indicate that an administrative laissez-faire policy will result in an enrollment of seven transfer students for each occupational student. Obviously, then, to prevent students from enrolling in courses in which they probably will not succeed and in which many have no real interest, it is necessary for the board members to establish and insist upon the implementation of two priorities: A rich offering of occupational programs, and counseling in occupational areas so that students will be interested and drawn into areas where they can be successful.

The area of tuition is one in which the stereotype board member's background might show through. When the topic of raising additional revenue is discussed, one of the early considerations is the raising of tuition. Interestingly, board members who point with pride to their institution's "open-door" policy too often enact tuition increases when additional revenue is needed. Board members would do well to recognize that "open door" is as meaningless a term as "equal opportunity" to the child of indigent parents unless tuition is free or low. If additional funds are needed, board members should refrain from increasing tuition, and should argue forcefully for funds from the appropriate sources--the state and federal governments and the relatively untapped private sector. Only when boards refuse to hinder those whom they are charged to help by holding firm on tuition rates will state and federal governments

be forced to reorder national priorities. Such funds are available; one need only look at the national defense budget or the advertising budgets of our major corporations for evidence. Boards, unlike businesses, should not pass along cost increases to the consumers, the students in this case. "Free enterprise" is hardly an appropriate term when the student has no option but to absorb increased fees or drop out. Board members can render a significant service by standing firm on tuition and helping to put an end to the vicious circle of denial of educational opportunities to the poor.

Evaluation of the College. Since it is the responsibility of the board members to establish college goals, then it must also be their responsibility to examine the achievements of the college to learn to what degree the goals have been attained. The continual evaluation of the programs and activities of the college is an extremely important responsibility that seldom receives the time and attention it needs. Some people are convinced that the most reasonable and efficient way to improve community colleges is for boards to routinely and objectively evaluate the colleges. As Cohen and Roueche suggested,

> . . . simply by asking the right questions, boards of trustees can become the primary stimuli for needed educational changes in American junior colleges. In this context, boards can create an environmental press where presidents must become educational leaders simply to retain their positions. The possibility of developing educational leadership in American junior colleges rests heavily with boards of trustees (3:34).

In the same publication, Cohen and Roueche illustrate their point by listing twenty-five questions board members should be asking to evaluate community colleges. Some examples are:

> What per cent of the community's young people attend the college? What per cent leave before completing one term? Before completing the program for which they enrolled?
> What measures are being taken to reduce the student attrition rate?
> Where do students go when they leave the school? Types of jobs gained? Further education?
> To what degree are teachers held accountable for student learning? (3:38)

Other questions that should be asked are:

What occupational programs are offered?

How many students complete their programs?

Do students find jobs in their areas of specialization?

Are follow-up studies being made to determine the preparedness of the students for their jobs?

Is diagnostic testing done to determine student needs?

How many enrollees in extension courses in off-campus locations would prefer to come to a campus?

What is a counselor's role?

Can counseling be in groups or must it be with individuals?

Does the college have specific objectives for counselors so that their performance is measurable?

Are students being recruited from low-income and minority groups?

Is there an adequate scholarship or student aid program? Does it have periodic examination--are needs measured against available funds?

These and other basic questions are common to all community colleges. They are not one-answer questions but require a continuing check on college activities and programs. Merely to ask the questions, moreover, is hardly enough. Board members should encourage periodic presentations by the students, faculty, and staff. Board members must keep their personal records of questions asked, answers received, reports requested, and reports delivered. Only if board members are meticulous in their record keeping can they measure the performance of the college and the president. Each question must be satisfactorily answered, each report must be delivered when requested and contain the necessary information. If such a check is not maintained, the entire procedure is liable to be worthless.

Under such circumstances a competent president will welcome the opportunity to keep his board informed for he is then assured, on a continuing basis, that they understand what the college program is all about and he need not consume his energies with "handling" the board on the basis of charm, personality, or subterfuge. An incompetent president will be pressured rather than assisted by this format and will soon seek employment elsewhere.

Special attention must be given here to the rate of student failure. In this instance board members may well find themselves in an adversary relationship with the faculty. The board must continuously encourage the staff to assist students to succeed. The staff will need that encouragement because teaching includes times of despair or anger or frustration which, if left unchecked, may turn into cynicism. The board, not distracted by daily association, can retain its ideal--the student wishes to succeed and the college, through its agents, programs, and policies must help him to succeed. The board must insist upon reasons for student failure. What is the atmosphere in the classroom? If it provokes anxiety, it is wrong. No student should ever feel threatened in a classroom. What are the grading practices? In a society in which people spend millions attempting to rid themselves of fear, trauma, and anxiety, why should an atmosphere conducive to those emotions be tolerated in a classroom, and why should fear and guilt be fostered by primitive grading practices? Boards must provide encouragement by acknowledging the difficulties faced by the teaching staff while gently but firmly reinforcing the premise that the college exists for the student.

Selection of the President. In order to select the president of a new institution, many boards turn to "experts" in the field to provide them with candidates, or they advertise, or they combine the two techniques. Mrs. Bastian

recommends that "new boards should seek out experts in the community college movement as consultants and should not limit their search to the state or to the local community." Ultimately, new boards are confronted by candidates.

On what basis are the candidates interviewed? In a recent discussion conducted by ARA-Slater School and College Services, Harlow J. Heneman, retired general partner of the management consulting firm of Cresap, McCormick, and Paget, stated, ". . . it's a curious thing that in all of our forms of organized human endeavor, the college or university president's job is one for which an appointee never needs to have demonstrated that he's a good administrator, or a good selector of people, or that he possesses good judgement" (17:24).

Certainly those qualities are needed in a prospective president; what is necessary is to refine these and other requirements into objective criteria so that the interviews do not deteriorate into personality contests taking place under artificial circumstances and based solely upon subjective impressions. What the specific criteria will be depends upon the desires of the individual board; what is imperative is that the board determine its requirements prior to the interview and reduce them to objective criteria. Only in that manner can the interviews be pertinent to the task at hand, that of selecting a person to perform the task of directing the operation of a college.

Selecting a president of an existing institution poses different problems. Was the previous president a success or failure? Was there sadness in his departure or was his leaving encouraged? Is the institution stable or upset? Is his successor to be in the late president's image or is a change indicated? Is it time for innovation or stabilization? The board must consider all of these questions so that the objective criteria can be agreed upon prior to seeking candidates for the job.

One of the best examples of a community college's preparing objective criteria in advance for the selection of a president is provided by John Tyler Community College in Chester, Virginia. In the fall of 1969 the board was faced with the necessity of selecting a new president. With the assistance of the departing president, the board developed a reasonable plan for interviewing and evaluating applicants. First, the college board expressed several of its beliefs and goals in resolution form. Then the board derived a list of questions from the resolution. These questions then were used as a primary basis for selecting a president. A copy of the resolution and questions is contained in the Appendix.

The Board-President Relationship. The board assumes two basic tasks in terms of presidential relations: It strives to retain and support a competent president, and it uncovers an incompetent president and terminates the relationship.

The board cannot adequately perform these tasks unless it establishes and acts upon the basis of well-defined objectives assigned to the president, objectives that are derived from and will contribute to the fulfillment of the college goals. Objectives are specific and measurable statements. Objectives detail what a particular person is expected to do within a specified period of time. In fairness to all parties involved objectives should be determined and agreed to in advance by the people directly concerned, in this case the trustees and the president. Furthermore, progress towards attainment of the agreed-upon objectives should be the primary basis for evaluation. This approach, although time-consuming, requires the board to understand more fully the state of the college, its goals, and what needs to be done to more nearly achieve those goals; decreases the probability of confusion and misunderstanding; increases the likelihood of success; and reduces tensions and fears that arise and proliferate

in uncertain and ill-defined situations.

How to recognize and retain a competent president and how to uncover an incompetent president are dependent upon the interest, industry, and competence of the board. The greatest service the board can render is in disciplining its president in the most constructive sense of the word.

The board must require detailed explanations of ongoing activities and of proposed projects and courses of action. A competent president will appreciate these guidelines and be able to function effectively. The worst error a board can make is to fail to probe critically into reports made by the president. All too often the board tolerates ill-conceived and ill-prepared reports from the president because of inattention or reluctance to insist upon lucid answers to probing questions.

Such a relationship may well turn out to be fatal for the president. From within this framework, many boards slide into the role of dealing with the president not on the basis of valid, objective criteria, but, instead, on the basis of a personal relationship wherein the personality of each board member comes into play with the personality of the president--a most precarious undertaking for all concerned.

The truly unfortunate aspect of a relationship based upon subjectivity rather than objectivity is that the college is always the real loser. The board can be displeased and set the machinery in motion to make a change; the president, as often as not, will repair to the presidency of another institution; but what of the college? Students respond to faculty, faculty reflect the interest of the president, and administrators attempt to communicate that interest. For the period during which the board and president are agreeing to disagree, administrators, concerned about their own futures, begin to worry. This concern may manifest itself in looking for employment elsewhere, vying for power inside, or floundering. None of this behavior is of benefit to the

college. Faculty members are left to their own devices--for better or for worse, depending upon the individual. Students are left to the integrity of the faculty. What the college does not have is direction.

During the search for the new president the situation described above prevails, for acting or interim presidents are in no position to effect significant changes, and, by and large, are selected to affix a chief administrator's signature to official documents. And yet it is preferable to have an interim president for several months instead of hastily appointing a successor and later regretting the decision.

How quickly the situation is stabilized depends upon the new president. It is imperative that this kind of situation be avoided if the institution is to perform its educational functions effectively.

A competent president, then, welcomes an informed board, for he can depend upon it for support; an incompetent president cannot endure with an informed board, for he will shortly be recognized as incompetent. The board must work hard to become informed and to stay informed; there are no shortcuts and there is no simple formula. If there is any secret, it is in the knowing of the questions.

Relations with Students, Faculty, and Staff. A knotty problem: How do board members gain insight into operations of the college other than through the president? The one extremely important prerequisite is that they be knowledgeable about college programs and functions by having worked diligently and by having asked the right questions as outlined earlier. Without a working understanding of all facets of college activity, the probing of sources other than the president is fraught with danger, for the board member is unable to separate possible fact from malicious fancy and might well end by losing a good president or indicting a poor one for the wrong reasons. But having

acquired the requisite background, it is important both for board members to have access to faculty and students and for faculty and students to have access to board members.

A monthly breakfast or lunch on campus open only to students and faculty is a format wherein board members can engage in discussions that may be free from inhibitory factors. Also, board members should periodically visit the campus unescorted for personal observation and informal chats with students and faculty so that they retain a continuing "feel" of the atmosphere where the learning should be taking place. Regardless of the methods used, it should always be clearly understood that the purpose of these conversations and visits is to gain first-hand information and not to interfere in the administration and operation of the college.

A different problem: What if responsible members of the staff conclude the the president's conduct is driving out capable people (who inevitably depart "to take a better position"), that he is destroying morale, and that his priorities are not in the best interests of the education of students? What if these staff members have attempted to point out the problems to the president and have been rebuffed? At present, the only option is to leave the college, for there are not presently means whereby faculty or administrators can communicate their concerns about the administration of the college to the board.

For an administrator who has exhausted his remedy with the president to go to a board member is to place his own position at the college in jeopardy. The line between loyalty to the institution and disloyalty to one's superior is razor fine. For board members to make themselves available for unsigned letters will certainly attract cranks and the chronically disgruntled, but maybe that is the price that must be paid to allow a forum for the legiti-

mately concerned who have no other method of bringing serious problems to the attention of the board.

One method suggested by some board members is the adoption of a policy encouraging responsible committee rapport with the board. This policy would empower an established committee, which may already have direct access to the board on certain matters, to bring specific and substantiated charges to the attention of the board. Having access to the whole board would preclude the charge of currying favor and would reduce the chances of individual board members probing for information not available to others. Such an arrangement could also further reduce the credence given to unsubstaniated and surreptitious charges which in turn could reduce rumors, vague accusations and needless distrust.

Governmental Relations. A public community college is a governmental unit that is dependent upon state financial assistance. The state funds may be the difference between the ability of the college to offer a rich, varied program of study or be limited to basic offerings; or the college may be dependent upon the state funds for its very survival. It is important, then, that the board members understand the structure of state government if they are to be able to govern wisely. First, it is necessary to recognize limitations; board members cannot relate on a daily, administrative basis with state legislators, legislative staff consultants, and representatives of state agencies, nor can the college president.

This is not to say that some board members or presidents might not have the governmental know-how to be perfectly fine governmental relations people; the fact is that the assignment is a sensitive, continuous one, vital to the welfare of the college and demands more time and concentration than board

members and presidents are able to give. It is important that the assignment be given a staff member with experience in the intricacies of government. For this person to be effective, it is necessary that the board members, the president, and the staff member understand and agree upon the duties to be performed. To assume that all board members or presidents have a working knowledge of government is unwise. For the welfare of all, a thorough workshop session is in order. In this manner the governmental coordinator can explain how state government operates while he emphasizes those areas in which the college can be affected. The board and president benefit from the explanation, and the coordinator can earn the respect and confidence of his employers. Periodic progress reports at board meetings, with opportunities for discussion of pending legislation, are a must; as long as the board members are kept informed, legislative surprises will be kept to a minimum, and as long as the coordinator is accountable to the board and president for actions taken by the legislature, he is under constant evaluation. At certain "busy" times a regular newsletter prepared by the coordinator can be helpful. Implicit in the foregoing is the gentle reminder for board members and presidents to resist the temptation to compete in the governmental arena; such meddling will diminish the stature of the coordinator, thereby dulling his effectiveness on behalf of the college. At such times as the board and/or the president are needed for legislative hearings or for informal "buttonholing" of selected legislators on specific issues, the coordinator will solicit the assistance needed while carefully outlining the task to be performed.

A useful device to be considered is an annual dinner meeting on campus with the state legislators and their spouses, board members and spouses, president, coordinator, and maybe one or two other key staff people. The affair serves several useful purposes: It brings the legislators to the campus, it

provides a relaxed setting for interaction between board members and legislators, and it provides an opportunity for a brief report of college activities by the board chairman and president. If at all possible, the meal should be prepared and served by students in the food service program; it is good experience for the students and it is salutary for the legislators to see tax dollars constructively at work.

On the federal level, the coordinator's role is different. Higher Education Facilities Act (HEFA) grants should be handled by the business officer as should Housing and Urban Development (HUD) loans. Vocational Education Act grants and reimbursements should be handled by the occupational dean who should have an ongoing relationship with the state vocational department personnel who administer the state plan for distribution of the federal funds.

The coordinator then can concentrate on keeping abreast of federal legislation so that he can coordinate proposal possibilities with programs at the college. The key to success is to help faculty and staff to help themselves. To assist faculty and staff members to obtain grants by bringing them together with proposal possibilities is worth the coordinator's salary many times over in terms of morale alone.

Committees of the Board

If the board and president have established a healthy relationship based on mutual respect, other areas of cooperation for the good of the college can be explored with neither party feeling threatened. The utilization of committees is one such possibility. At least three areas common to all colleges can be considered.

Capital Program. It is a unique college, indeed, that deals with architects on equal terms. In many circumstances boards and presidents confronted with the need to construct multi-million dollar structures are faced with the prospect of submitting to "presentations" by several architectural firms. If no one representing the college understands architecture or construction, it is impossible to ask pertinent questions. How, then, is a selection made? As often as not, lacking objective criteria, a selection is made on the basis of "presentation" and reputation. Such a selection process does not necessarily accrue to the best interest of the college. An ad hoc committee could be formed with its members coming from the board and selected staff who either have some expertise and/or interest in the field. This committee could solicit the assistance of professional architects in the area who would not be project bidders. These architects might be volunteers or paid consultants. This committee would have the capability of determining the requirements of the building while exploring creative aspects of design. From within this framework basic questions could be posed so that the "presentation" becomes a meaningful meeting rather than a Madison Avenue production for the uninformed.

Fiscal Program. Colleges are big business; yet many are still run as if they were general stores located on a spur off old U. S. 66 between a gas station and a poolroom. The chief difficulty lies in our well-meaning but deadly friend, the ill-defined relationship. The business officer has a great many tasks, which include supervising accounting procedures, purchasing, preparing and administering capital programs, preparing and revising operating budgets, supervising payroll, costing new programs, preparing bond issues, and submitting a mountain of forms to various governmental units. One area where he does need help is in superintending investments. Colleges turn over great sums of money, and the difference between part-time investment practices and careful investment

practices can mean the difference between thousands of dollars the college might have had but does not. The problem arises when the business officer declines to ask for help for fear of showing weakness, and the board members either do not understand business or have a reluctance to broach the subject for fear of meddling. The answer is a simple one that does not threaten the business officer or place the board in an awkward position: Establish a college goal that calls for maximum return on its investments. If the business officer is performing all the tasks noted above, he cannot possibly have sufficient time to keep abreast of the rapidly changing nuances of the investment market. An ad hoc committee comprised of board members who have investment experience, staff, friends of the college in the community, and the business officer, can, however, perform that function well. The benefits are notable: There is participation by representatives of college and community; there is camaraderie in the challenge; an aspect of the business operation is open rather than an oppressive, unfathomable mystery; and the college gets top dollar for its investments.

Negotiations. A new dimension has been added to college governance, that of contract negotiations. Several states already have enacted legislation that authorizes recognized bargaining units for faculty and staff. In those states not yet affected by such laws, faculties and staff personnel are not somnolent, and boards would do well to recognize the changes taking place about them. To be unprepared is inexcusable. The period of negotiation is but an interim period in a never-ending round of data gathering. An ad hoc committee with board, administration, and citizen membership can screen in advance pertinent data relating to salary schedules, work loads, fringes, grievance procedures, leave policy, evaluation criteria, and so on, so that the college position and anticipated demands can be reconciled as much as possible prior to negotiation. It

is crucial that the team representing the board reflect at all times the unanimity of the board and president. The ad hoc committee, acting as clarifying agent, can serve the purpose of resolving the college position during all phases of lengthy sessions so that misunderstandings are averted when relationships, both with the bargainers and with fellow board members and administration, may become tense. Some presidents have already experienced difficulty in attempting to carry the burden of directing a negotiating team on the one hand while obtaining board approval of his decision-making on the other. An ad hoc committee format enables the president to exert leadership in a much more advantageous setting.

A word of caution is in order here. Ad hoc committees by definition are formed to serve a single purpose and disband when the purpose has been served. It is, as in the case of a negotiating committee that may be reconvened every six months, important that membership be for a limited time and routinely changed lest members begin to feel pride of ownership, thus destroying their effectiveness.

Rewards

At the 1970 AAJC convention John Lombardi proposed that board members be given some compensation (11). Subsequent discussions among board members revealed that most of them present at the convention felt board members should be reimbursed for costs of attending meetings, conferences, and other related activities. While recognizing additional compensation is probably needed to enable representatives of low income neighborhoods to serve as board members, few would encourage regular compensation for board members. Most feared a salary or similar compensation would reduce the selflessness and sincerity of the board members. Time may alter these views. In the meantime one major reward still

remains: To be a contributing factor in creating an atmosphere that respects each human being so that he is free to learn and enjoy his fellow man.

Conclusion

By now some readers may be re-examining the title of this publication and wondering to themselves: Where are the opportunities? Responsibilities we have in profusion, but where are those opportunities? The answer, as unreasonable as it may seem at first, is that they are one and the same. Each responsibility is another opportunity for a trustee to perform a better service for his community. That is why each responsibility contained in this publication, especially the ones underlined and described in detail, should be considered and examined at length. They are opportunities to do a better job, to build more effective community colleges, and to better represent all the people.

And what about better representation? After the Hartnett study of the composition of college and university boards was reported early in 1969, reports of changes toward more representative boards became common. "The New York Times editorialized in October of 1969, 'Now a healthy tide is running toward reform of college boards of trustees to add diversity to their membership . . .' (New York Times, 1969)" (7:1). Because of these reports Rodney Hartnett did a follow-up study by surveying the 536 institutions that participated in the original survey. Although the survey revealed that reports of changes were exaggerated, some real changes toward better representation had taken place. The report of the follow-up study, dated December 30, 1969, is summarized in part by the following:

> It might also be argued, of course, that the "substantial" increases in Negroes, women, persons under 40, etc., are really not substantial at all, but only token increases amounting to very little real change in the composition of these boards. First of all, 14% of the institutions adding Negroes, say, or 17% adding women, still is not a very large percentage. The biggest increase,

in fact--for persons under age 40--still occurred at fewer than one third of the institutions. Furthermore, as shown in Table 3, most of these increases refer to an increase of just one woman or one Negro, etc. The percentage of institutions adding more than one in these categories is extremely low.

While such qualifiers are well-taken and serve notice that American colleges and universities are definitely not "on the make" for trustees of groups not previously well-represented, it is at the same time clear that some welcome modifications seem to be taking place. Take the increase of Negro trustees as one example. Fourteen percent of the non-Negro institutions adding at least one Negro may not be all that dramatic, it's true. Yet, that 14% in this case happens to represent an addition of 66 Negroes to 56 institutions--nearly six times as many Negroes originally serving on non-Negro college boards! Surely this signals a real change--slow, perhaps--but the beginnings certainly, of more diversity on college and university governing boards. (7:10)

Although a trend toward more balanced representation is evident, it may be too little, too late. In his latest publication concerned with governing boards, Rodney Hartnett concludes with the following provocative statement. "In the long run, in fact, the whole idea of a hierarchical structure in American colleges and universities, with the board of trustees at the top, may give way to a more egalitarian form of governance. Until this happens, however--or perhaps while this is happening--the increased representation of women, Negroes, young people and others traditionally absent from trustee groups may well set the tone for the 1970s, adding an uncommonly liberal element to many governing boards." (9:47)

Regardless of the prophetic accuracy of Hartnett's statement, there is a trend toward better representation. Now we need a trend toward more conscientious governance, toward more definitive goal setting, toward more incisive evaluation, toward more constructive relationships. No doubt this will require more time and energy from each board member. But how else can the responsibilities be fulfilled and the opportunities realized?

Appendix

Local Board
John Tyler Community College
Proposed Resolution
Concerning Accountability for the Effectiveness of Educational Programs

December 1, 1969

WHEREAS, equal opportunity for all persons is a cherished American ideal;

WHEREAS, personal opportunity in the contemporary world is largely dependent upon competencies gained through the process of formal education;

WHEREAS, John Tyler Community College is a public institution existing for causing students to learn in accordance with their own goals and the needs of our society and economy;

WHEREAS, accountability for student learning is an accepted responsibility of the entire college community;

WHEREAS, the Local Board of John Tyler Community College is desirous of continuing the development of an instructional program that accommodates differential learning rates of students and produces measurable evidence of student learning;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the

1. college president shall periodically inform the Local Board of:
   1) the success of students in attaining course objectives, including their attrition and failure rates;
   2) the success of students in occupations assumed upon leaving the college, including the employer's perception of the value of the college's programs;
   3) the success of students who transfer to other institutions;
   4) the extent to which the programs of the college are attaining the stated aims of the college.

2. college community is encouraged to:
   1) continue the development of an instructional program that accommodates differential learning rates of students and produces measurable evidence of student learning;
   2) foster an "open and frank atmosphere" focused on enhancing the "teaching-learning climate" for which the college has been commended by the accrediting agency;
   3) emphasize research-based planning for the continuing refinement of the instructional program to the end that college resources contribute maximally to opening the doorways of opportunities for students.

Local Board
John Tyler Community College
Questions for Presidential Candidates

December 1, 1969

The Board should set the conditions for presidential leadership and then find a man who will accept total responsibility for such leadership. If possible the Board should seek not simply an institutional administrator but an educational leader who is able and willing to be held as accountable for student learning as for his other responsibilities.

In an interview situation, one means to identify a man who is willing to accept responsibility for student learning is to ask him the right questions and tell him what is expected of him in the job. If the Board only asks questions about buildings, budgets, previous experience, etc., it may expect that the man will respond in kind and not address himself directly to the central reason for the existence of the college: student learning in accordance with their own goals and the needs of our society and economy.

When the candidate is interviewed, that for which he is to be called to account can quickly be made known to him. If he is a flexible, dynamic sort, he will rise to the challenge; if not, it is better for all that it be known in advance. The man who becomes the new president must--if he is to be called educational leader--hold himself accountable for student learning and not leave student achievement to tradition and good intentions.

Following is a list of questions that may be helpful to the Board to ask presidential candidates. By no means are these questions the only ones that should be asked. They represent an attempt to give a new president some indications of the significant educational challenges facing John Tyler Community College.

1. Fact: The average test scores of new students entering John Tyler Community College are lower in all categories (Math, English, Natural Science, Social Science) on an examination given nationwide than the average scores for all new students entering other Virginia community colleges.

   Question: Will you assume responsibility for the design of programs that will accommodate students who enter the college unprepared for meeting the demands of college freshman work--and assure that such programs are in fact successful in terms of student progression to higher levels of study and the number of students who stick with the program? Do you have any specific ideas as to how you would achieve this? Will you be willing to give a report on this to the Board after each quarter?

2. Fact: Student performance on the job assumed after leaving the college is an important measure of the success of the college. The perception of the college held by leaders in industry, business, and the profession will have much influence on the development of the college.

Question: Will you periodically survey employers for information that will indicate how they perceive the college's programs? And will you report the results of this survey information to the Board?

3. Fact: It is a policy of the Virginia Community College System that faculty increases shall be on "merit." The policy does not define how merit shall be determined. Merit pay, when practiced, traditionally does not (or is unable to) base increases on student learning. The "systems approach to instruction" now being developed at John Tyler Community College provides the instructor with the means to demonstrate evidence of productivity in terms of student achievement. In its simplest form, this evidence can be final examination papers that may be compared to the results of a test given to students at the beginning of the quarter.

   Question: Will you assure that faculty members are held accountable for student learning? That pay increases are based on student achievement in so far as feasible?

4. Fact: A community college has many different programs. Tyler has about 25. Students are ordinarily not allowed to enter many programs without screening. The process of screening is crucial for student progression and achievement. Currently, the exclusion of students from programs of study for whatever sound reasons is a source of controversy on many campuses.

   Question: Will you give attention to the bases used for placing students in different programs and report periodically the results to the Board on this matter?

5. Fact: Higher education is essentially conservative and change does not come easily. Most professors are inclined to lecture as the predominant mode of instruction. Experimentation with and refinement of the instructional process is needed. Experimentation for its own sake is not the purpose; but rather experimentation based on a carefully developed plan for enhancing student learning.

   Question: Will you attempt to foster within the college an atmosphere of experimentation and concern for continuously improving the instructional program in terms of measurable student achievement? And of trying new methods for causing students to learn, disregarding those that do not succeed and refining those that produce success?

6. Question: Will you assure that studies are made to determine the percentage of students who leave before completing one quarter? Before completing the program for which they are enrolled? How many students return at later dates after having dropped out?

7. Question: Will you assure that follow-up studies are made to determine where students go when they leave the college? The types of jobs they take? How successful they are if they transfer to a four-year college or university?

8. Question: What means would you suggest for determining what specific abilities or skills are gained by students in college programs? How will you know that students who complete programs are in fact better prepared than those who drop out?

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